(c) the justification of getting a female candidate medically examined by a male doctor;

(d) whether, keeping in view the growing number of women in the army, Government propose to ask the authorities to appoint lady doctors for the purpose; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) As far as possible, lady doctors examine female candidates, but due to availability of limited number of lady gynaecologists, it is not always possible for lady doctors to conduct the medical examination of female candidates at all stations. However, examination by a male gynaecologist, wherever necessary, is invariably carried out in the presence of a female attendant. Only visual examination to rule out any congenital abnormality is carried out and no internal examination is conducted.

Procedure of medical examination of female candidates has since been reviewed by the Armed Forces Medical Services and is being modified to ensure that in future gynaecological examination of female candidates is performed only by lady doctors.

Supply of PC-3 Orion Naval Surveillance Planes to Pakistan by U.S.

572. SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to recent news reports on US decision to supply PC-3 Orion Naval Surveillance Planes to Pakistan; and

(b) if so, the veracity of the same and the likely impact on the balance of Naval forces in the region?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Government has seen news reports regarding the US intent to supply PC-3 Orion Naval Surveillance Planes to Pakistan. The veracity of the news reports has been established. In the event of Pakistan acquiring these planes, her surveillance capability in Arabian Sea will be greatly enhanced.